# DUTIES

INCUMBENT ON THE MEMBERS OF CHURCHES,

towards

# The Brethren

of their

# OWN COMMUNITY.

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THE MINISTERS OF THE SEVERAL

## BAPTIST CHURCHES,

ASSEMBLED IN ASSOCIATION

at the

## *Meeting House,*

in

## BYROM-STREET, LIVERPOOL,

on the

*24th and 25th Days of May*, 1809,

Send Christian Salutation to the several Communities over which they preside, meeting for Divine Worship, at

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ackrington, | Gildersome, | Preston, |
| Bacup, | Halifax, | Rawdon, |
| Barnoldswick, | Hebden-Bridge, | Rochdale, |
| Blackburn, | Leeds, | Rushworth, |
| Bradford, | Liverpool, Byrom-st. | Salendine Nook, |
| Bramley, | Manchester, New York | Sheffield, |
| Bursiem, | Street, | Sutton, in Craven, |
| Clough Fold, | Masbro', | Wainsgate, and |
| Colne, | Ogden, | York. |
| Cowling Hill, | Pendle Hill, | |

*PRINTED BY J. HARTLEY, ROCHDALE.*

1809.

# DUTIES

## INCUMBENT ON THE MEMBERS OF CHURCHES

TOWARDS THE

## Brethren of their own Community.

*Dear Brethren,*

AT our last annual meeting, you intimated a desire, that the subject of our present address might be the conduct to be observed by the members of churches towards their respective societies, and being mercifully preserved in the midst of so many surrounding calamities, and permitted peaceably to assemble on this public occasion, we hasten to comply with your request. The subject appears to be of great importance, because the peace and prosperity of any community must depend, in a great degree, on the orderly deportment of its individual members. We pretend to no dominion over either your faith or your practice; but because you desire it, we shall take the liberty to suggest to you such a line of conduct as we think will be pleasing to God, creditable to yourselves, and useful to the churches to which you respectively belong. We wish you to cherish a spirit of universal benevolence to all, who, in a judgment of charity, may be esteemed the lovers and followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whatever other distinction they may be known among men; yet we are of opinion, that it becomes

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you to pay a marked attention to those individuals and churches who are of the same faith and order with yourselves, among those however whose sentiments and general practice *do* correspond with your own, *that* community with which you have chosen to associate, stands entitled to the *highest* place in your affections.

Our present business is to point out to you some of the duties you owe to those societies into which you have voluntarily entered, that you may know how you ought to behave yourselves in the House of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth.

We recommend it to you, in the first place, to give a decided preference to the communion of your own brethren. The relation into which you have entered, claims such a preference, and you cannot withhold it, without violating a most sacred obligation. It does not in the least incapacitate you for paying a due degree of respect to christians of other societies.

Experience must have taught you, long ere this, that a primary affection for your own domestic circle, forms an essential ingredient in the cup of your social enjoyment, and we have no hesitation in affirming, that a similar feeling towards your christian associates, will be found equally essential to your religious comfort. Under the influence of this disposition, you will participate in the crosses and comforts of your brethren, and find a pleasure in laying yourselves out for their good in their collective capacity. You will meet with them constantly, and not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.

The time appropriated for social worship, you will not waste in worldly pursuits, or in the yawnings of indolence. This high regard for your brethren, and for the good of the cause you have espoused, will not permit you to rove from place to place, as many do in search of something new. It will check that spirit of religious gossiping, which forms so obvious a trait in the characters of many professors, and which occasions much mischief in churches where it abounds to any considerable degree. The temper we recommend to you, will, under God, guard you against being carried away with every wind of doctrine, propogated by the craft and subtilty of designing men, whose aim is to sow divisions, and to scatter the seeds of dissension in churches; who partially preach the gospel out of strife and contention, and not of good-will. It will also be a means of preserving you from that furious, restless spirit of party zeal; from that incessant striving about words to no profit; from those unhallowed wranglings, and that endless splitting of hairs, which tend only to puzzle; and from those foolish and unlearned questions that engender strifes, in which so many mischievously embroil themselves, to their great dishonour, as well as to the hurt of many with whom they are connected. That preference to your own communities; that supreme wish for their peace and prosperity which we recommend to you, would be a happy mean of exciting your zeal and directing your efforts for their good, as well as of preserving you from every thing tending to diminish their respectability, or to disturb their peace.

We would also guard you against permitting *private offences* to induce you to forsake the communion of the church. Some members of churches, as soon as they see, or imagine, any thing offensive in the conduct of their brethren, immediately withdraw themselves from the table of the Lord, and very often without mentioning any reason for the step they have taken. To us, this practice seems equally opposed to reason, and to the word of God. Before you withdraw from communion, it is surely needful to enquire whether the affair be known, and admitted by the church as real and offensive; whether it have been known long enough to have been corrected, and that yet no steps have been taken to that purpose. You ought not to stand at a distance from the church, because one member of it has done wrong, unless by connivance, or unjust forbearance, they have become partakers of the guilt contracted by the offence committed. Perhaps the offence is not real, or not so bad as you may imagine; personal application to the supposed offender is necessary to know how the case stands, before any thing else be done. If there be real cause for offence, then proceed as our Lord directs in the eighteenth of Matthew. By so doing, the cause of uneasiness may be removed; but by withdrawing from communion, you are more likely to make the rent worse than to repair the breach. Many have thought themselves justified in this conduct by the word of God, and have urged in their defence, Math. 5. 23. "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then

come and offer thy gift." It has been supposed from these words, that if one member of a church be offended at the conduct of another, it becomes his duty to absent himself from the Lord's Supper till his offence be removed. This however, we apprehend, is not the sense of the passage in question. It is not said, and there rememberest that *thou* hast ought against thy *brother*, but that thy brother hath ought against *thee*. It does not tell the *offended* party to stay away from the communion of the church; but it tells the man who has given the offence, to go immediately and have it removed. If you have given occasion for offence to any brother, then you have two duties before you; the first is to go and be reconciled to your brother, and the second is to go and offer your gift; and if you neglect either the one or the other, the guilt will lie at your door. No blame attaches to the person offended because *he* is there, nor to the church because the *offender* is there, so long as they are ignorant of the offence, or knowing it, are ready to apply the scripture means of removing it.

Let not a deep sense of sin keep you from the communion of the church. We have known some esteemed members of churches so deeply afflicted and humbled, by the recollection of their defective services, their remaining corruptions, and their actual transgressions, that they have not dared to hold communion with the church, lest God should smite them with the rod of his indignation, because of their presumption; lest he should meet them with this terrible interroga-

tion, "who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts."? They fear lest they should have so corrupted themselves, that their spot is not the spot of his children; but that they are of so crooked and perverse a generation, as to be entirely unfit to have a place, and a name in the house of the Lord. This conduct however, to us, seems founded in mistake, and hence we wish to caution you against it. What are the rich provisions exhibited on the gospel table? Are they not the tokens of the Saviour's love to sinners? the manifestations of the price paid as a ransom for their sins? Who are the suitable participants of this gospel feast? Are they angels that *have* no sin? or pharisees who *fancy* they have none? Are they not rather conscious transgressors, who alone can esteem and relish this feast of fat things? Rightly viewed, consciousness of guilt and humiliation, on account of it, would draw you *towards*, rather than drive you *from* the table of the Lord. But you add, "The force of temptation so often overpowers the feeble resistance we oppose to it, that prudence dictates the propriety of withdrawing till guilt be removed and strength recruited, lest God should frown, and his cause be dishonoured by us." Let it be remembered, however, that though time may efface the *memory* of your transgressions, it can never remove the *guilt* of them, and that, not they who *forsake* the ordinances; but they that *wait* upon the Lord in the means of his appointment, have reason to hope for the divine forgiveness. If you love sin, and determine to live in it, dont add to your crimes by putting on the form of godliness; but if you see

your sin, if you hate it, and abhor yourself on account of it, if you determine, by God's help, to oppose it, let nothing deter you from drawing near to the Saviour, in the way of his appointment.

We further exhort you to avoid *giving* offence in any thing. Societies are generally formed of persons possessing different degrees of natural and acquired abilities, and under the influence of very opposite tempers, prejudices, and habits of life; hence it requires no inconsiderable portion of prudence to adhere constantly to that line of conduct which will be offensive to none. Some supposing this to be impracticable, adopt a course thought to be right, and become regardless of consequences. Scripture example and precept, however, teach a different conduct. These shew that many things may be lawful that are not convenient; and that *right* may be prudently given up for the purpose of avoiding offence. An apostle is not ashamed to say "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." It is no mark of wisdom to treat the approbation of the brethren with indifference. It is an object worthy of your regard. The esteem of your brethren will add force to your exertions for their good, and in all probability, render your usefulness in the church much greater than it otherwise would be. We exhort you therefore brethren, to cultivate the social virtues with all possible diligence. Be affable, be courteous. Let your words and your actions shew that you pay a proper deference to your brethren, and that you are not willing to give offence in any

thing. After all your care, it is more than probable that offences will come, but when they *do arrive*, you will have the unspeakable pleasure of reflecting, that you have given no just *occasion* for them.

We add, that you should not hastily *take* offence. Be not easily provoked. In many cases, offences are the mere creatures of the imagination, where *only* they exist, and of which the offender has no knowledge whatever. To avoid this, you must never listen to the dictates of supposition or fancy, nor suffer imagination to supply the place of evidence. Consider every thing to be well meant, till you have solid proof to the contrary. Put the most favourable construction on the words and actions of your brethren. Make all possible allowances, and take notice of every thing, likely to extenuate what may appear, at first sight, to be unjustifiable. Recollect with what solicitous industry, you collect and exhibit every circumstance tending to prevent improper impressions from being made on others, by your own words or actions, or those of your friends, whose conduct you wish to set forth in the most favourable point of light. This will furnish you with a proper rule of judging in reference to the behaviour of others towards you. Be determined not to take offence, till you have, by personal enquiry, made yourselves thoroughly masters of the whole case, and found it impossible to do otherwise; till your love and your forbearance have nothing left to plead on the behalf of the offender; till your prudence and your patience have in vain tried every warrantable means of conciliation. Inattention to this precept has produced in-

unfeelable mischiefs in the churches, and hence we urge you to the observance of it with the greatest earnestness. It is not enough however that you avoid these evils, and many others that might be named; we wish you to be actively employed in doing what may serve to promote the prosperity of your respective communities.

Use your best endeavours to promote the harmony and peace of your respective societies. Where these are wanting, the comfort and spiritual benefit of church fellowship are lost, and the house of God is converted into a nest of hornets. We therefore exhort you to cultivate the spirit of meekness with unwearied diligence. Let its benign and heavenly influence excite and regulate all your words and all your actions. Love your own societies more than any others; associate with them constantly; speak to them freely; and study to find out the best means of uniting and harmonizing the whole body. Scatter no seeds of division, lest by their too often luxuriant growth they choke the word, and so render it unfruitful. Strive not about words to no profit but to the subverting of the hearers. Put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another; if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you so also do ye. And above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful. In promoting the peace and harmony of the church, you

multiply your own comforts, you imitate the Saviour, and you please and glorify your Maker.

Be deeply concerned for the *increase* of your respective churches. Not one of you ought to be indifferent about the churches growth, in every thing tending to advance the glory of the Redeemer and the salvation of men. It will be both honourable and useful for you, to exercise a care about the encrease of the church's *gifts*. By *gifts*, we mean talents for edifying and instructing the body of Christ, which is his church. In former times these were plentifully bestowed by him, for he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. The power of the Saviour is not in the least diminished. The residue of the spirit is still with him. He has a plenitude of gifts ready to be bestowed, and suited to the exigencies of every age and of every situation, but then he has declared, that for all these things he will be enquired of by the house of Israel to do them for them. It would certainly be a most favourable omen for the church, were you all so much alive to its interest, as to plead earnestly with God to bestow upon its members a liberal portion of his best gifts. Time and circumstances loudly call for your exertions in this way, for the harvest truly is great, but able and faithful labourers are few, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would raise up, qualify, and send forth labourers into his harvest, by whom it may be reaped and gathered in due season. It is not only needful for you to pray

for these, but also to watch unto prayer; to see what answers God may have given to the requests you have made to him. Look among the members of your respective churches, and see if you cannot discern some Elisha, on whom the mantle of Elijah may have fallen, but who, for want of being properly noticed by others, continues to remain in obscurity. Real ability is often shy and unassuming, and needs to be sought out and stirred up to activity. On the contrary, imaginary talents are often presumptuous and forward. The shallow stream is loud and rapid; but the deep, full river flows silent and slow. Two things it behoves you to mind, first, that you do not find gifts where the great head of the church has bestowed none, and secondly, that you neither overlook nor undervalue his favours where he *has* granted them. Look around among your respective brethren, lest any talent should remain wrapped in a napkin. Let every one consider it to be his duty to call into action every degree of ability adapted to edify the church, or bring glory to God. Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet we shew unto you a more excellent way. Be concerned to obtain an increase of grace. Let it be your individual aim to grow in grace, without which, gifts will be useless if not hurtful. Endeavour to improve yourselves in knowledge and faith, in love and obedience. That your profiting may appear to all, let your zeal and diligence be conspicuous. Be an example to the believers in word, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Do not content yourselves with present attainments, but go on towards perfection. Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. The

growth as well as implantation of grace depends on the divine agency, which, means the most feeble become efficacious. Without a heavenly influence you can do nothing; but with it, you may do whatever is required of you. Let therefore neither the suggestions of the enemy, nor conscious debility deter you from attempting the most arduous of all tasks, the subjugation of your lusts, and the improvement of your graces. Would you grow in nowledge and experience? Search the scriptures and your own hearts. Would you increase your faith? attend liligently to the ministry of the word, because faith cometh by hearing. Would you love your brethren more? Then look more at their excellencies and less at their defects. Would you, in a word, bear a nearer resemblance to your Saviour? Then do you all with open face behold, as in glass, the glory of the Lord, for by that means you may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. It is surely sufficient encouragement, that however feeble your efforts, God will ultimately crown them with success. Your harvest will follow your seed time; for you shall have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Let no opportunity of doing or of getting good escape you. In the morning, sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that, or whether they shall be alike good. Seize time by the fore-lock, and do not suffer its precious moments to elapse without due improvement. Let a sense of human incapacity check your presumption and self confidence, but not unnerve your diligence in the pursuit of spiritual improvement. Reckon

not that ye have already attained, that ye are already arrived at perfection, but press on t[illegible]wards it, depending on the arm of omnipotence for s[illegible]pport, and when ye have done all, count yourselves un[illegible]ofitable servants, for the genius of the gospel is not [illegible] countenance negligence and inactivity, but to exci[illegible]eal and diligence; and at the same time to gua[illegible]against pride and self-dependance. For Zion's sake d[illegible]not hold your peace, and for Jerusalem's sake do not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

We further urge you to a concern about the encrease of your churches in regard to numbers. To convert sinners and to add to the church, is certainly the province of the Almighty. He only can do this effectually. No one else can illuminate the understanding, convert the will, and give a new bias to the affections. This we are ready to own from a full conviction of its truth. We observe however, that in all ages he has carried on this work, by selecting and using such instruments and means as seemed good in his sight, generally working in such a way as to make a divine interference visible to the enlightened and thoughtful mind. He puts his treasusure into earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power *may appear* to be of God and *not* of men. With this view he has raised up, qualified, and sent forth, a constant succession of gospel ministers, to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God. These are the ambassadors of Christ to the benighted nations of the earth, sent, in the name of their sovereign Lord, to

beseech the rebellious sons of men to become reconciled to God. Though these labour with apostolic zeal in the fulfilment of their mission, yet success depends entirely upon the co-operating influence of the divine spirit; hence the whole glory of it is properly ascribed to him as the only efficacious agent. These, it must be noted, are not the only labourers employed in the important work of collecting and bringing home the objects of his mercy, which are scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth. As in former times, so now, he gives to some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; on every one of his followers the Saviour bestows some talent for usefulnes, to be honourably employed in his service, in the conversion of sinners, and in extending the spiritual kingdom of the Redeemer among men. Let it be the care of every one of you to ascertain, by personal examination, the nature and degree of the gifts bestowed upon you, and to consider how these may be best employed in promoting the conversion of sinners, the encrease of your respective churches, and consequently, the glory of God. Some of you may serve in one capacity and some in another, but be ye all employed. Not one of you should stand all the day idle. Let it be your daily concern to think what you may do, to benefit the souls of those, by whom you are constantly surrounded, especially, of those who are wholly inattentive to their best interests. Though you may be neither qualified nor called to teach publicly as a minister, yet you may possess talents very fit for conveying instruction privately. Some christians excel in selecting suitable times and modes of address, by

which their remarks become, not unfrequently, both pleasing and lastingly useful to minds previously thoughtless and indifferent, if not opposed to religious instruction in any form. By a judicious and seasonable observation, you may sometimes rouse the careless, impress the thoughtless, caution the unwary, warn the unruly, or comfort the desponding. Employ yourselves daily in copying the best models in this way. The benefits resulting from it are incalculable. Our past negligence should rouse us to greater diligence for the time to come. But admitting you have no capacity for speaking to sinners, yet perhaps God may have given you property, a portion of which you can very well spare to promote so desirable a work. In this case you may find many ways of laying it out very usefully. You may purchase religious tracts to give away; you may support sunday-schools; you may bear part of the expenses attending village preaching; you may assist in supporting missions and missionaries, either at home or abroad, and in many other ways serve the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. Supposing you are equally destitute of teaching, abilities, and of property; yet still you may do great good. If you can neither teach nor pay others for teaching the ignorant, yet you may edify them greatly by a holy life. Let your light so shine before them, that they seeing your good works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven. Be obedient to the laws of your country; fear God and honour the King; pay a due deference to all civil magistrates; cultivate peace in your respective neighbourhood; be honest in all your dealings with mankind; just to the persons, property, and characters of all, and ever faith-

ful to your word. Avoid the very appearance of evil, and endeavour to live near to God. Let your love to him appear in all your dealings in the world, by your care in training and cultivating the minds and manners of your children and other domestics; and by your zeal and exemplary conduct in the church of God; by continuing steadfast in the apostles doctrine in breaking of bread and in prayers. If you fancy yourselves so low in the world, that nobody will notice your conduct so as to be edified by it, you have still one way left by which you may essentially serve your generation. A throne of mercy is accessible, and though no other means be within your reach, yet you may do great good by the fervour and frequency of your addresses to God for the extention of his power and mercy in turning sinners from the love and practice of sin, to the love and practice of holiness. Let the sin, the danger, and what is still worse, the indifference of sinners, stimulate your exertions in their favour, and because divine aid is necessary to give efficacy to your endeavours, give him no rest till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Know brethren for your encouragement, that he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with chearfulness.

When we see you diligent in promoting the Redeemer's interest, we shall consider that as a pledge of success, for God will not permit your labours of love, pregnant with holy wishes and desires for success, to fall uselessly to the ground. Depend on his wisdom, power, and goodness, in all cases and under every circumstance, and be assured, you shall find the pleasure of the Lord prospering in your hand. Be stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain in him. Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

# MINUTES

Of the Association held at LIVERPOOL, in the Byrom-street Meeting House,

*on the 24th amd 25th Days of May*, 1809.

The brethren met at two o'clock, Wednesday, June 24th, brother Davies, pastor of the church there, introduced the service by singing and prayer. Brother Littlewood was chosen moderator. The letters from the several churches were then read, the contents of which afford matter both of prayer and praise. Some of our churches are going on well; apparently growing in grace and encreasing in numbers. Some however are mourning under the hidings of God's face In the course of the last year many have been cut off by death, but under very favourable circumstances. A number have been excluded; some for immoral conduct, others for a direliction of sentiment. Many complain of embarrassed circumstances, on account of the badness of trade and the dearness of provisions. On the whole, the accounts from the respective churches were rather favourable than otherwise. We still have to lament, that several of the associated churches are not sufficiently careful to send letters to the association. We have had to complain on this head before. We shall be highly gratified if our sister churches will be more attentive to this in future, that we may have no more reason to complain. The circular letter, drawn up by Brother Littlewood, was then read, and brother Lister, pastor of the baptist church, in Lyme-street, concluded by prayer. Met again at seven o'clock in the evening, when Boother Thompson, of Burslem, in Staffordshire, prayed. Brother Steadman preached from Rev. 1. 18. Behold I am alive for evermore, amen; and brother Price, of Wrexham, concluded in prayer. Thursday morning, met at six o'clock, when brethren Shepherd, Dyer, Edminson, and Hyde, engaged in prayer. Met again at half past ten. Brother Littlewood prayed. Brother Langdon preached from Eph. 3. 8. The unsearchable riches of Christ. Brother Fawcett from Acts 16. 17. These men are the servants, &c. and brother Harris, an independent minister, concluded the public service by prayer. After which the ministers and messengers met, and passed the following resolutions: 1. That the circular letter, drawn up by brother Littlewood, be

printed. 2. That the next association be holden at Bradford, on Tuesday and Wednesday in Whitsun-week, and that brethren Langdon, Hirst, and Fawcett, be desired to preach, and in case of failure, the brethren Hyde, Simmons, and Littlewood. 3. That in future, those ministers only be appointed to preach who are members of the associa tion. 4. That the next circular letter be on the certainty and proper use of the doctrine of election, and that brother Langdon be requested to draw it up. 5. That a subscription be immediately opened for the support of an itinerancy, to he under the direction of the association, and also for the purpose of defraying the expenses of ministers, incurred by attending the associations. To accomplish these purposes, the subscription was opened as under :

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Rev. Rd. Davies,* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *Mr. W. Rushton* | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| *T. Littlewood* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *R. Houghton* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *W. Steadman* | 0 | 10 | 6 | *T. Lonsdale* | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| *J. Fawcett* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *J. Hargreaves* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *Mr. W. Hope* | 5 | 0 | 0 | *W. Cribbin* | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| *Thos. Freme* | 3 | 3 | 0 | *J. Johnson,* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *Rob. Jones* | 3 | 3 | 0 | *J. Lang* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *J. Bury* | 5 | 0 | 0 | *J. Gill* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *Sam. Hope* | 5 | 0 | 0 | *S. Maine* | 0 | 10 | 6 |
| *A. Wedgwood* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *Mrs. Hird* | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| *R. Johnson* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *Miss Hird* | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| *J. Smallshaw* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *Mr. Peter Hope* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *Wm. Telly,* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *Z. Barnes,* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *Oliver Holt,* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *J. Beddome* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *J. Edensor, dn.* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *Benj. Ditto,* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *R. Thompson* | 1 | 1 | 0 | *Henry Pope* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| *Thos Ditto,* | 0 | 10 | 6 | *Smaller Sums,* | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| *Wm. Hunter* | 1 | 1 | 0 | | | | |

That the ministers of the several associated churches, be requested to use their influence in their respective neighbourhoods to promote this institution, both by getting subscriptions, and where convenient, by making annual collections in aid of it. It appears from accounts contained in the letters received, that 137 have been baptised, 4 restored, and 4 received by letter, in all 145, from these are to be deducted, 32 removed by death, 21 excluded for improper conduct, 4 dismissed to other churches, so that the neat increase is eighty-eight.

N. B. The associate churches are requested to insert the total number of their members in their next letters to the association.

# AN ADDRESS

*To the Churches in the York and Lancaster Association, recommending exertions in support of Itinerancy, &c.*

As specified in the minutes of the resolution of the association.

Dear and honored Brethren,

As real christians, we trust you feel it your duty and your honour, to be followers of that Lord and Master to whom you have devoted yourselves, and by whose precious blood you have been redeemed, and made kings and priests unto God. Now of him it is affirmed, *that he went about doing good.* Doing good to the bodies, but *especially* to the souls of men. This was his constant employ; in the pursuit of it he not only took divine delight, but spilt the last drop of his blood. Animated by such an example, we chearfully hope you will readily embrace every opportunity of benefiting the immortal souls of your fellow creatures, and promoting the interest of Christ among men. Such an opportunity is now afforded you. Providence has cast your lot in a part of the kingdom more than commonly populous. In many of its largest towns and villages, the interest of Christ is yet in a languishing state among the several denominations of his followers; in that of the baptists, to which you, from motives of conscience, belong, the most languishing of all; indeed it can scarcely be said to exist. In some of these places, we have meeting houses already erected, which would tend greatly to facilitate our exertions in support of our interest. These things we have long surveyed with emotions of grief and ardent desire. We have often made it a matter of prayer, that we may see something done for Christ in those places. God has, we trust, begun to answer our prayers. He has impressed the minds of all who associated with us, with the necessity of a speedy attention to that object; this gave rise to the resolution inserted in the minutes of our meeting, with which we presume you are already acquainted. Our worthy friends at Liverpool came forward with the greatest zeal and generosity, as is manifest from the preceding list of subscribers, and have set such an example as will, we trust provoke you to emulation.

The resolution already referred to, will inform you of the specific objects to which our attention is directed, objects which, we trust, will appear of such importance as to call for your zealous support. You know, brethren, that we have distinguished ourselves from the main body of professing christians, by our attempts to restore the order and discipline of the church of Christ, and especially the ordi-

nance of christian baptism, to their primitive purity. This is an object of great importance, and yet will be allowed to be not of the *first* consideration; that will be owned to be the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways, and the saving of souls from death. In what we now recommend to you, however, we have not only this first and most important object directly in view, but combine with it also what we allow to be but of secondary moment, namely, the bringing those happy souls we may be the means of converting to God, to those views and practices in religion which appear both to us and you best to accord with the primitive standard We shall most likely make those baptists, whom, under the divine blessing, we may be so happy as to be the instruments of making christians.

Were we the first of the followers of Christ, who in modern times have attempted an itineracy for spreading the gospel; we need be neither afraid or ashamed, as we may plead, in support of our practice, the commission of our divine Lord "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." But we are not the first to make such an attempt: We might mention the names of a Whitfield, a Wesley, a Grimshaw, and others of different communities, whose labours in that department have been abundant, and attended with such glorious success as loudly proclaimed the divine approbation of their exertions We, however, only remind you of the labours of our independent brethren in these parts of the kingdom, and likewise of those of our baptist brethren in the southern and western parts of it. The former have two or three itinerants constantly in employ, whose efforts have been not only effectual in introducing the gospel into various benighted parts of the country, and in planting christian churches where there were none before, but also in greatly enlarging those which were before planted; and the latter, by exertions somewhat similar, have been the means of establishing a considerable number of churches in different places in the southern and western counties, several of which bid fair to flourish, as well as of greatly encreasing the numbers and strength of those which were formed before. Let us, dear brethren, copy their example, and chearfully hope for their success. God is able to qualify and send forth suitable persons for such an employ, for this therefore we request your earnest and constant prayer. But pecuniary aid is indispensibly necessary, for this also we venture to solicit your aid. We are deeply sensible of the disadvantages under which many of you labour through the depression of

trade, and also chearfully acknowledge the readiness with which you have already come forward in support of several schemes for publick utility; we therefore only ask such assistance as your circumstances may enable you to render, consistent with the other important undertakings for the temporal and eternal welfare of men, in the support of which you are already engaged.

We hope, dear brethren, we can appeal to him who searcheth the heart, upon the purity of our motives in thus addressing you, we do not seek our own things, but the things which are Jesus Christ's, we therefore address you with humble boldness. We readily believe that you, brethren, cordially love that Lord whom we love and serve, and have felt, and continue to feel, so much of the constraining influence of his love, as will make you rejoice in every opportunity of promoting his interest in the world, and think that portion of your worldly substance best employed which is spent in the promoting of that interest. We therefore apply to you with chearful hopes of succcess; and instead of multiplying arguments to enforce our application, we only remind you of that which was urged by the apostle Paul, when pleading with the Corinthians on a similar subject. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, may be rich. 2 Cor. 8: 8, 9.

N. B. A committee and treasurer will be appointed at the next association. Interim subscripticus and collections will be thankfully received by the Rev W. Steadman, Bradford; Rev. T. Langdon, Leeds; Rev. T. Littlewood, Rochdale; Mr. Hope, Mr. A. Wedgewood, Liverpool; and Mr. H. Pope, Manchester.

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THE

# MORAL LAW

AS

# *A RULE OF CONDUCT*

TO

# *Believers.*

## A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

## BY GAIUS.

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This Letter was published in the Evangelical Magazine, for 1804.—It contains much divine truth—is consistent with the experience of all true Christians, and is well calculated for general usefulness.—To this end, and with the hope of promoting the prosperity of Zion, it is now re-printed.

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